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The word 'amaptia' in Paul

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THE WORD ἁμαρτία IN PAUL

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THE WORD ἁμαρτία IN PAUL

Introduction

One needs to be constantly on guard against making Paul a systematic theologian. Enough harm has already been done in regarding him as always logical and consistant. He was a man of his time, and as such is characterized by a certain looseness of speech, especially in the realm of the pychological and the spiritual.[1] We should also remember that some of the phrases which appear to us cold and stilted, had for his own generation vital and striking associations. Two great certainties seem to underlie his thinking. One, the fact of sin and grace in the human soul; the other, the working of the divine spirit and the resistance of the flesh to it. We will not, therefore, take the position that Paul dealt exhaustively with all ideas of sin, nor will we say that everything unmentioned was necessarily beyond his ethical horizon.[2] The great problem in understanding his real meaning, is in understanding his figures of speech and his general terms. Certainly if we regard them from too literal a viewpoint, we shall be unfair. On the other hand, we must not interpret him in the light of Twentieth Century thought. Some of his statements apply to a part-

1. Gardner, The Religious Experience of St. Paul, ch 8
2. Deissman, St. Paul, a Study of Social and Religious History, 931

icular situation, and he probably never intended them to have a universal application.

BACKGROUND

The Greek Conception of ἁμαρτία

The idea of sin is quite lacking in early Greek literature, in its deeper religious meaning, that is, sin as a false relation towards the divine will. But later Greek literature shows a marked development of this idea.[1] From the sixth century B.C. onward, there is a growing sense of sin and hopelessness. The feeling of unworthiness and failure which Judaism had discovered much earlier, Greek thought, beginning with Socrates' self-examination and emphasis on individuality and subjectivity, came to recognize. The Greek conception of man as sufficient unto himself, gave way to the growing sense of the need for a Savior.[2] The Jew was buoyed up with the hope that the best was yet to be, but the Greek philosophical schools had no place to turn, except inward upon a man's own courage, and in the last resort, often gave way to abject pessimism.

Plato thought of evil rather than of sin and felt that it was due to the body and to ignorance. Aristotle recognized a consciousness of sin in men and believed that man can choose the right or the wrong. For him, ἁμαρτία truly meant "missing the mark." Philo saw the seat of sin in the flesh, much the same as did Paul.

1. Gardner, The Religious Experience of St. Paul, 23
2. Angus, Mystery Religions and Christianity, 206 ff.

Vergil pictured the tremendous contrast between man's grandeur, and his failure.[1]

There is a striking similarity between the language and thought of Paul and the Stoics. Stoicism, "a system of materialism with spiritual aims,"[2] produced some great characters whom we cannot but admire. It is characterized by moral earnestness and high ethical teaching. However, it tended towards despair and, since it demanded such great courage and self-control, it never reached the masses.[3] Yet the similarity of thought of St. Paul and men like Epictetus and Seneca, for example, is worth noting. Epictetus says ὃ θέλει οὐ ποιεῖ καὶ ὃ μὴ θέλει ποιεῖ (Bk. 2, ch. 26) and Paul states, οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω τοῦτο πράσσω ἀλλ' ὃ μισῶ τοῦτο ποιῶ (Rom. 7:15) Epictetus says οὐδεὶς δίχα ἀπουλείας καὶ ζημίας κακός ἐστιν (Bk. 2 ch. 10) and Paul writes τὰ γὰρ ὀψώνια τῆς ἁμαρτίας θάνατος (Rom. 6:23) Epictetus' statement οὐδεὶς ἁμαρτάνων ἐλεύθερος ἐστιν is equaled by Paul's observation,[4] and experience.

The same parallelism is noticed in the writings of Seneca. It has sometimes been assumed that the similarities are so striking, that Seneca must have been the pupil of Paul.[5] For example, we find this,

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1. Angus, Mystery Religions and Christianity, 210
2. Taylor, Ancient Ideals, 1, 376
3. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, 272 ff
4. Sharp, Epictetus and the New Testament, 2 (the above examples.)
5. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, 272 ff

"If we wish to be just judges of all things, let us first persuade ourselves of this: that there is not one of us without fault . . . No man is found who can acquit himself; and he who calls himself innocent does so with reference to a witness and not to his conscience." (On Anger 1.14 11.27) But to both Epictetus and Seneca, and the Stoic School in general, sin refers more to error in attaining one's own ideal, than to rebellion against the divine law, as it does with Paul. But the high ethical concepts and the beautiful character of a Marcus Aurelius, makes us realize that paganism approached very close to Christianity, at several points. Paul's use of Stoic language, concepts, and ethical terms, must be apparent, I think, to all.

Angus sums up the idea of sin for the Greek under three heads. First, sin was due to ignorance. Secondly, man was fallen but he was struggling towards the spiritual. Thirdly, sin has to do with the will. The thought life of the Graeco-Roman world had awakened to the fact of the personal nature of sin and stressed the idea of retribution and reward in the future life. Sin also took on more and more, an ethical connotation.[1]

One of the main reasons for the appeal of the mystery religions and Christianity, was the fact that

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1. Angus, Mystery Religions and Christianity, 314

they recognized the presence and seriousness of sin and promised relief. They sought to remove the estrangement between God and man, often using as a method, penance and self-torture. Juvenal (Satires vi, 522) tells of a devotee of Isis crawling on bleeding knees to break the ice and dip three times in the Tiber.[1] Orphism emphasized the removal of sin by the use of rites and taboos.[2] Pyrhagoreanism, however, reformed and popularized Orphism by stressing a metempsychosis of souls according to moral progress and by promising a moral retribution in a future life.

For the Gnostics, God and Matter was at war with one another, in a clear-cut dualistic conception. Evil was in Matter.[3] This growing sense of sin created a growing desire for oneness with God. Most of the Greeks felt that evil could be overcome by concentrating upon the real values and living a life in full accord with nature. Their answer to the problem of sin was to develop good habits and train the will through heroic endeavor. But in actual practise, the ordinary man was likely to be driven to despair or indifference.

The Use of the Word ἁμαρτία in Contemporary Documents.

It is our purpose at this point to enquire into the

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1. Halliday, Pagan Background of Early Christianity, 140
2. Moore, Religious Thought of the Greeks, 161
3. Ibid, 161 ff.

connotation of the term, ἁμαρτία in the pagan world. Words grow and assume new meanings but a study of a word in its earliest beginnings throws light upon its later significance. Paul used terms and figures of speech which were familiar to his hearers. While it is true he often deepened and enriched the meanings of these words, still we never fully understand him until we have delved into the antecedents and contemporary significance of his ideas. Briefly, then, let us glance at the use of ἁμαρτία in classical Greek.[1]

The original meaning was "to miss the mark," as for example, in using the spear. (Iliad 5:287) It meant to fail, or to go wrong. (Oddesy 21: 155) It is sometimes used in the sense of being deprived of, or that which you do not receive. (Oddesy 9: 512) The meaning gradually comes to be that of doing wrong or sinning, though by sin was not meant the deeper ethical, spiritual thing which it later meant in Christian thought. There is the significance of sinning against other men or wronging them. (Plato's Republic 336E: Sophocles O.C. 968) It meant a mistake, or an error.

The best was to gain the significance of the word in the environment of Paul is to examine its use in the contemporary documents. The collections of papyri and such word studies as Moulton and Milligan's "The Vocabul-

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1. These examples are from Liddell & Scott, Greek-English Lexicon.

ary of the Greek Testament," help us to understand what ἁμαρτία meant to the people of Paul's own day.

Here and there we find an example that reflects almost exactly the new Testament use by Paul of the noun. From an inscription of Cyzicus' territory and dated the third century B. C., we have this:

ἁμαρτίαν μετανόει [1].

A Greek inscription of the second century A.D. uses the term in reference to the god, that too great a show of curiosity towards the divine constitutes an ἁμαρτία.

ὃς ἂν δὲ πολυπραγμονήσῃ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἢ περιεργάσηται ἁμαρτίαν ὀφιλέτω Μηνὶ Τυραννῳ ἣν οὐ μὴ δύναται ἐξειλάσασθαι [2].

The religious interpretation seems to be present in this excerpt from a papyrus dated 274 A.D. τῶν

ἁμαρτιῶν τὰς πονηρίας συνεχῶς ἀνορθουμένων

Probably Paul could very well agree that the continuous sins[3] of the wicked are capable of improvement.

An interesting letter of 254 A.D. has a reference. It is a letter sent regarding the exemption of two citizens of Antinoopolis from nomination to municipal office. They have been exempted by a previous official and desire to know why this exemption is not being honor-

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1. Journal of Hellenic Studies, (Vocab. of Gr. Test.)
2. Sylloge Inscriptionum Gracecarum, 633
3. Griechische Urkunden der Papyrussammlung zu Leipzig I 119. (N. T. Vocab.)

ed by the new official. The offending amphrodogrammateus apologizes because he was ignorant of the matter and apparently takes the office himself. This reference occurs, αὐτός ὑπέσχετω ἀντί τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἀγνοίας πρόφασιν ὑποτειμησάμενος υποστήσεσθαι τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο τὰς λειτουργίας[1]. The meaning attached here seems to be that of an error, although it is quite a serious one.

Closely allied is the word ἁμαρτήμα. Its general significance seems to be that of a failure, or a fault, or an illegal act such as breaking the edict of an emperor. In the eleventh year of Hadrian, Flavius Titanus, praefect of Egypt, made a proclamation. This proclamation dealt with the duties of officials connected with the local archives and their relation to the state archives in the state library at Alexandria. He threatens punishment to those who disobey his orders. ἄδειαν ἑατοις ὧν ἁμαρτάνουσι ἔσεσθαι νομίζοντες[2]. ἁμαρτήμα is clearly a breaking of the law. Towards the end of the same letter the word is used again in practically the same sense. Persons are threatened with punishment who are guilty of "violation" of the command. τοὺς παραβάντας καὶ τοὺ(ς) διὰ απειθίαν καὶ ὡς οφόρμην ζητοῦντας ἁμαρτήματων τειλλωρήσομαι[3]. A letter of Ptolomy Euergetes dated 165 B.C. threatens

1. Papyri Oxyrhynchus, VIII, 1119. ii
2. P Oxy. I 34. iii. 4 (Vocab. of Gr. Test.)
3. Ibid

destruction to those caught in a violation or "sin." ἀπολελυκότες πάντας τοὺς ενεσκημένος ἔν τισιν αγνοήμασιν· ἢ ἁμαρτήμασιν κτλ.[1]

The use of the verb ἁμαρτάνω, seems to indicate wrong action, particularly in relation to other people. One of the most interesting documents that has come down to us is the letter from the prodigal son, Antonis Longus, to his mother Nilus. It comes from the second century A.D. and gives us a warm, vital glimpse into a bit of human interest. The boy had quarreled with his mother and left home to live a life of evil. He writes this letter to her after meeting an old acquaintance who had informed him that his mother had been in the metropolis looking for him. The letter is a rough, though sincere plea for reconciliation and a confession of guilt. οἶδα ὅτι ἡμαρτήκα is his expression. The parallism with Jesus's story of the Prodigal Son is of course apparent.[2]

A letter from the time of Augustus protests the writer's innocence from having wronged, or sinned against this particular individual to whom he writes. ἐγώ μὲν οὐ δοκωι ἄξιος εἶναι ὑβρίζεσθαι ... οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡμαρτήκα τι εἰς σε[3]

1. Paris Papyri 63 xiii 2 ff
2. Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, 187
3. Moulton & Milligan - (Vocab. of Gr. Test. 25)

Again, in a letter of an emperor to the Jews, the term ἁμαρτήμα evidently connotes the violating of a command. καὶ γὰρ τοὺς εἰς ἡμᾶς ἁμαρτάνοντας δεόντως κολάζεσθαι εἰκός [1].

A man who desecrates a tomb is to be regarded as a sinner (ἁμαρτωλός). From Asia Minor there are many threats such as ἁμαρτωλός ἔστω (θεοῖς κατα)χθονίοις[2]. Such inscriptions as these clearly point towards a religious use of the term, as it is the individual's relation to the gods. ἁμαρτωλός is used a synonym for "guilty" (ἔνοχος), "cursed" (επαράτος), "unjust" (ἄδικος), and "impious" (ασεβής).

A letter from Justinus, an Egyptian Christian, to another Christian, Papnuthius, dated the middle of the fourth century A.D. closes with the phrase εἰς γὰρ ἰμει τὸν ἁμαρτουλόν. He has previously asked to be remembered by his friend in prayer, and this represents in general, the use of the term by Saint Paul.

From these few examples we may see, to a limited extent, the meaning of ἁμαρτία for the people of the Graco-Roman world. We may see its usage when Paul first took it up and made it a vehicle of his thought in regard to sin. It had a certain use in religious matters. Generally speaking, it seems to have been used in reference to the breaking of a right, or a taboo of the god. Any violation of the sacred or the holy was reckoned an ἁμαρτία.

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1. Paris Papyri 33. 50 ff (Vocab. of Gr. Test.)
2. Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, 113, 114

Anyone who broke the law or decree of an emperor, or of his officer was a "sinner." He was regarded as one who had done what it was unlawful to do. As in the case of the god, the sinner is one who breaks a rule and the ethical connotation of the term seems to be lacking.

But in the case of human relationships, ἁμαρτία seems to suggest evil actions against another personality. A man protests against the implication that he has "sinned" against his friend, evidently meaning that he has not been unethical in his relations to him. The "prodigal son" confesses that he has "sinned" against his mother, in that he has hurt her by leaving home and giving way to loose living.

In the case of the god, or the emperor, ἁμαρτία is the violation of the rite or the law. But in the realm of human relationships, the original idea of "to miss the mark," seems to still be vital. It is taking the wrong course, a missing of the way, which leads to unhappiness for all concerned.

Jewish Idea of Sin

The question as to whether Paul is primarily a Jew or a Greek is a matter of great argument, and there are outstanding scholars on both sides. My own feeling in the matter is that at times Paul is very much the Hellenistic thinker, and at other times he is a reflection of Jewish thought. He appears to me as a blend of the

two, and as near a balanced blend as would be humanly possible. This is his essential genius of the task which he performed for Christianity. But whether or not one agrees with this view, most of us are willing to agree that at least there are traces of Jewish thought in Paul, and that in such a study as this, a brief look into the general characteristics of Jewish theology will be to the point. Barbour in his book, "Sin and the New Psychology," (ch. 7) says that Paul was a victim of ambivalence. That is, he had two sets of opposing emotions directed against one object. Before his conversion he was a Jew with a set antagonism against Jesus, though with a growing hopelessness as far as his own religion was concerned. Then came the conversion experience which meant a definite break with his previous attitude, and an intense feeling and emotionalism which gave him the touch of genius. But while the conversion experience changed the course of his life, it could not entirely change his nature. In other words, he was always the Hellenistic Jew. Some of his thoughts and teachings are very much more intelligible in the light of Jewish training. To just what extent his Jewish background may account for this particular part of his theology, remains to be determined as we go along.

My thought on the relation of Judaism and Hellenism to Paul is well summed up in the words, "Paul symbolizes the conjunction of Jewish faith and Greek thought . . his work is the result of a harmonious blending of

these unwitting allies which though decidedly alien to each other were compelled by history to co-operate for its own mysterious ends."[1] Macchioro goes on to say that Paul's idea of inherited sin is certainly Jewish, but that salvation through the death of Jesus shows the Greek influence of Orphism. Jesus as an expiatory victim for sins is again the Jewish influence, while the continuous expiation of sins by oneness with Christ, is a characteristic of the Orpheus cult.

Briefly, then, what was the Jewish conception of sin? It was a more serious thing than it was to the Greeks, for it meant an offense against God, or a breaking of his Laws. The result was an estrangement from God. Three stages in this process were recognized. First <u>het</u> or a straying from the path unwittingly. This seems nearly to embody the original meaning of ἁμαρτία, "to miss the mark." One could sin in ignorance but this did not excuse him from punishment. Secondly, <u>avon</u>, the perversion of the straight order of law. This, of course, is reckoned as being more serious then the first stage. Thirdly, <u>pesha</u>, which is open defiance to God and the most serious stage of all. This is deliberately missing the mark or choosing the wrong way.[2] For the Rabbis, sin is "mitzwah' or every evil impulse.

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1. Macchioro, <u>From Orpheus to Paul</u>, 214
2. Kohler, <u>Jewish Theology</u>, ch. 8

Every man has two natures, or perhaps it is better to say that everyone has two impulses. This is sometimes confused with the dualism of the Greeks but it is essentially a different concept. The unity of man is not questioned by the Jews, but this unified nature expresses itself in two different directions. The center of the evil impulse is in the flesh and the lower impulse manifests itself through the flesh.[1]

The free will of man makes it possible for him to give reign to either the good or the evil. The weakness of the flesh is again and again referred to, and the flesh comes from God. But man is not subject to the flesh for it is subject to the control of each individual. This is the thought found often repeated in the Old Testament. Israel very often follows the lust of the flesh and goes astray, but the Nation is not so predestined to sin. The apocalyptic literature also insists that man has been made in the likeness of God and though the evil impulse has entered into him because of his free will, he is meant for the best things. Such a thought is expressed in Baruch: "Let no man rejoice over me, a widow, forsaken of many: for the sins of my children am I left desolate; because they turned aside from the law of God, and had no regard to his statutes . . ."[2] The supposition is that they

1. Porter, "The Yecer Hara etc., Yale Biblical & Sem. Studies, 106
2. Barach 5: 12b-13

could have walked after the ways of God, had they so desired. The Divine plan was that man should be without sin "because God created man for incorruption and made him an image of his own proper being."[1]

That man is free to choose the good or the evil, is borne out by man's feeling of guilt. The sense of guilt comes about because the individual feels that he could have chosen the good.[2] A man thus stands condemned before himself. Evil, then, becomes a sort of testing for man as is so clearly dramatized in the Book of Job, where Satan is a prosecuting attorney.

In the second century B.C. sin is mostly a breaking of the Jewish Law.[3] The great ethical, moral messages of the prophets gave way to the narrower concepts of the legalists. Judaism closed in upon itself as if desirous of marking time and preserving what it had, so that the chief emphasis is upon the importance of ritual and law observance. This tendency at times asserts itself so strongly, that sin becomes almost a non-moral thing.[4] This is the doctrine of such books as 1 and 2 Maccabees, 3 Ezra, Judith, and the Psalms of Solomon.

Such a conception tends to narrow the sense of sin and make it a less serious and tragic thing than it is

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1. Wisdom of Solomon 2:23-24
2. Kohler, Jewish Theology, ch. 38
3. Hughes, Ethics of Jewish Apocalyptic Lit., 212 ff
4. Moore, Judaism, I, 460 ff.

in the thinking of Paul. For example, this amazing statement is to be found in Issachar 7:1 : Behold therefore, as ye see, I am a hundred and twenty-six years old and am not conscious of committing any sin." Such a statement would only be made if the concept is narrow. We might compare it with Paul's words in 1 Cor. 4: 4 "For I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord." Charles suggests in a footnote[1] that this later part might be regarded as a criticism of Issachar's self-complacency. Paul testifies that if this were all that constituted sin, then he was, as a sincere Pharisee, free from sin. But sin to him, means a great deal more than this.

For the Rabbinical Jews, sin was hateful enough, but repentance was enough.[2] There is an underlying assumption that in this matter, man is sufficient unto himself. God was hardly close enough to men to be of any vital aid in the overcoming of evil. But the Jew was most careful to insist that the presence of sin in the world did not reflect upon God. There was no evil so far as God was concerned, because he used it to carry out a good purpose. Sin was punishment, but in the best thought, punishment because of God's love. However, the overcoming of sin, is man's task,

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1. Charles, Test. of the Twelve Pat., 109
2. Glover, Paul of Tarsus, 37

and he must depend upon himself primarily.

Sin is a denial of the spiritual. It springs into life because of folly and lack of understanding.[1] Part of the responsibility may be thrown back upon Adam, as the father of the race. At least in Alexandria at the end of the first century B.C. there is the beginnings of the doctrine of inherited depravity. Paul, as will be brought out later, found much in this idea to accept. In Palestine during the second century B.C., evil was considered due to demons and was traced to the Fall.[2] At a much later time the existence of moral evil and its power are for the first time traced to Adam and Eve in Slavonic Enoch.

The ethical concept of sin, however, is not altogether lacking in the literature of this period. Jubilles 1:29 pictures a gradual coming of the Kingdom of God and the elimination of evil. In Levi 18:4 the coming of the Kingdom means the disappearance of evil but it is to be slow and gradual in coming and is dependant on the ethics of Israel. The seriousness of sin and the need for cleansing is apparent in some of the later psalms as Psalm 40: "Mine iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart faileth me." Psalm 51 voices the consciousness of sin

1. Mackintosh, article, "Sin," E.R.E., VII 187 ff
2. Hughes, Ethics of Jewish Apoc. Lit., 212 ff

and the deep desire for forgiveness and purification: "Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me" . . . ."Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew within me a right spirit."

The Jew in all his thinking, regarded sin as having a relationship to God. Sin was an offense against God and it meant the withdrawal of God's presence.[1] It is worth noting that both Plato and Paul insisted upon the seriousness of sin, but for Plato, the cause was the necessity of a righteous universe, while for Paul, the seriousness was due to the holiness of God. Later Israel more and more recognized the sense of deep sin and recognized the need of divine grace for its removal.

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1. Moore, Judaism, I 460 ff
2. Gardner, The Religious Experience of St. Paul, 197

THE CONCEPT OF SIN IN PAUL

THE NATURE OF SIN

The Origin of Sin

As to the origin of sin, Paul reflects his Jewish training. He holds to the same view with the Rabbis, which view is also often expressed in the Apocalyptic Literature. Briefly it is that the first man Adam, tempted by his wife, broke a law of God's, thus committing the first sin and allowing sin to enter into humanity. This is the note which Paul sounds over and over again: sin came through Adam.

But when it comes to understanding just what Paul means when he says that sin entered the whole race through Adam, we run into many conflicting opinions and much difficulty. He says that "through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin."[1] So much is perfectly clear so far as Adam is concerned but how did Adam's sin affect all of his descendants? He is comparing the sin of Adam with the redeeming act of Christ. The evident suggestion is that both of these acts have consequences beyond themselves, and that from Adam there was passed on to the race "The liability to sin and the liability to die as the punishment of sin."[2] The meaning seems to be that men have inherited the tendency to sin from Adam.[3]

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1. Rom 5: 12
2. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C., 132
3. Ibid, 134

The whole argument is here very much complicated, but a summary of his meaning seems to be given in verse 18 of the fifth chapter: "so then, as one man's transgression resulted in condemnation passed upon all men, so did the righteous act of one result for all men in a righteousness which leads to life." A little further light is shed upon the problem by his reference at the close of a similar discourse in the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians: "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (verse 49).

The phrase πάντες ἡμαρτον is what causes the difficulty of interpretation. This has sometimes been interpreted as meaning that in the sin of Adam, we all individually and personally sinned. With this view, I do not agree, for such an idea suggests sin committed beyond our control and for which we could not be logically held responsible. But Paul always insists that we cannot excuse our sin by making Adam responsible. Each man is responsible for himself, for while sin is without, temptation is within, and this is the center of man's responsibility.[1] Even when he is in the greatest of despair over his inability to put down the evil impulses within, there is not the slightest hint of blaming this upon the original sin of Adam.

This theory that Adam's sin originated the tendency

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1. Moore, Judaism I, 474 ff

in human nature to sin, but did not cause men to actually commit sin, is further brought out by the contemporary Jewish literature of Paul. This is clearly suggested in Baruch 54: 15-19. While the origin of sin with Adam is assumed, the fact that each man is to be held responsible for his own sin is stressed. "Each one of us has been the Adam of his own soul." The same thing is true of the Apocalypse of Ezra. Adam was overcome because of a wicked heart with the resulting misfortunes of death and toil. Other men, however, do not sin because of Adam, but on account of their own evil hearts. God gave the Law and then men allowed the evil heart to grow up within them. But man can escape this power, and in the New Age, the evil heart will be taken away, and man will no longer sin.

In fact, according to the Talmud, the evil impulse has been placed in man to be overcome. God had created the evil impulse in his desire to discipline man.[1] Thus the evil impulse itself furnishes a good purpose and use. Man is not regarded, then, as being the helpless slave of sin that was committed by Adam, but is rather regarded as capable of ruling it, and is in fact expected to do so.

This is essentially Paul's position. Sin entered through Adam and there was passed on to his descendants the liability to sin. But this is not to be regarded as an excuse for sin or as having made every man a sinner at birth. It is the tendency which we inherit.

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1. Moore, Judaism, I, 474 ff

Great Influence of the Jewish Concept on Paul

God was imminent to the Greek, in a sense that he never was to the Jew. God was not very far from anyone and the native dignity of man fitted in with this conception much more than did the sense of sin. "The Greek knew no original sin; he was almost unconscious of the ravages of moral evil in his nature; he believed he was his own saviour by exercising, after the illumination of wisdom, his personal will-power."[1]

However, it is true that this self-sufficiency was shattered. There is in the world of Paul, a growing sense of sin and failure. This is most clearly brought out in Virgil, and in Seneca. The great Stoic philosopher, in particular, is conscious of the warring element of sin in his flesh and approaches very close to the ideas of Paul on the subject. But even here, it is more a failure to obtain one's Ideal, than it is a trespass against God. And in the last analysis, a man must work out his own salvation.

This sense of sin was emphasized and further developed by the Mystery Religions. The need of reconciliation and forgiveness, was widely felt, and constitutes one of the main reasons for the popularity of the Mysteries. They promised cleansing through sacramental grace. Puri-

1. Angus, The Environment of Early Christianity, 98

fication might be obtained through rites, and salvation was to be had through initiation into the mysteries.[1] To the Mystery Religions, sin was primarily personal defilement caused by doing things forbidden by the deities.[2]

The Jewish ideas of sin have already been touched upon. For the most part, sin was the breaking of the Law, but it is apparent that Judaism had a much more serious conception of sin than did the Hellenistic World.

Seriousness of Sin

We may now ask, which of these ideas Paul took over? It is apparent at once that he is closest to the Jewish idea, but for him it had an even deeper and more serious connotation, than it had for contemporary Judaism. It is more than an infringement on the taboos of the deity and more than a failure to be true to one's ego-ideal. It is in fact, "all the evil in the race that separates man from God."[3] He is evidently a man who has such a passionate thirst for righteousness, that he has become exceptionally sensitive to his shortcomings and failure to obtain it. Sincerely he had sought it in the Law and had failed to find it. In Christ he had found salvation, and yet years afterwards he still groans in despair at sin's continued mastery.[4]

1. Angus, The Mystery Religions and Christianity, 240
2. Reid, article "Sin" (Roman), E.R.E., XI
3. Barbour, Sin and the New Psychology, 84
4. Deissmann, St. Paul, A Study etc.,

The harsh outlines of the hideousness of sin never softened for him. "Everything in the Pauline teaching starts with the sense of sin."[1]

The seventh chapter of Romans is to be regarded as autobiography in my opinion. It is as Glover says, "as if such writing could be anything but autobiography."[2] "He is a man who has failed, who has sinned, and who has been forgiven, and who can never outgrow the wonder of his forgiveness."[2] And it might be added that he was never able to outgrow his sense of inherent unworthiness, and the sinfulness of humanity in general. This comes out of his own experience, first of all, no doubt, because of his extreme sensitiveness of the holiness of God and his own failure to approach in any way that holiness, by his own power, as it was revealed to him in the Law.

But the seriousness of sin impressed him in such a unique degree, also because for him it included so much. It is not merely a failure to keep certain rites and regulations as it was to the legalistic Jews, nor was it confined to external actions. For Paul, sin has to do with a man's motives and inner purposes as well as with his external activity. "But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin."[3] (πᾶν δὲ ὃ οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως ἁμαρτία ἐστίν).

1. Gardner, The Rel. Exp. of St. Paul, 23
2. Glover, Paul of Tarsus, 39
3. Rom. 14: 23

That is, every act a man performs with a doubt in his mind, means that he is condemned by his own conscience, and hence has sinned.[1] But the point is made clearer in Romans 7: 7. "for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet." And when sin came to be a matter of motive as well as action, then the Law drove him to despair. "It is not the act itself but the conviction in which it is done which decides for Paul, whether it is good or evil."[2]

Sin, to Paul, is personal and apparently objective. Here we must be careful not to press his figures of speech too far. But he pictures it again and again as an outside power invading and subjecting men.[3] In the trespass of Adam, sin found an opening, and then entered into humanity.[4] Paul also personalizes sin, so that Sanday says that if we follow his thought to its logical conclusion, he evidently believed in a personal devil.[5] However, if we follow his thought to its logical conclusion in many places, we will end up somewhere that is quite foreign to his spirit, the reference in 2 Thess. 2: 3 which refers to the coming of the "man of sin," certainly suggests a personal devil. This is not so strange when we consider the thought-world in which he lived. Sin is man's enemy, and a man must grapple

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1. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C.
2. Schweitzer, Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, 199
3. Scott, Christianity according to St. Paul, 40
4. Rom. 5: 12
5. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C., 145

with it and overcome its power.

Significance of Fleshly Sins

It is to be noted that his idea of what constituted an individual sin is not different than that of his own day. Counters that were used in the games of the day have been found. On one side is a number and on the other is the name of a popular vice or virtue. The same vices are found in 1 Cor. 6: 9, 10, with the addition of "covetous" and "idolaters".[1] The comic dramatists give added light upon the popular vices. If one compares the scolding of Ballio the pander in the "Pseudolus" of Plautus, one finds that the most characteristic terms of abuse also occur in the lists of Paul.[2]

The sins of the flesh loom high in Paul's idea of sin. For example, after listing the works of the flesh and contrasting with them the fruits of the Spirit, he closes with this: "And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof."[3] This is partly due, no doubt to the prevalent immorality of his day, particularly in pagan society. But it seems to me that the sins of the flesh appear so important to Paul, because he must have found these particularly difficult things to overcome in his

1. Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, 316
2. Ibid. 317
3. Gal. 5: 24

own experience. To a certain extent, at least, a recognition of a certain thing as serious sin, means that we have found it a particularly hard thing to overcome for ourselves. Paul, a man of strong passions and emotions, living in a society in which lust often ran wild, thinks of sin primarily, as giving way to fleshly desire.

Schweitzer, in his discussion of Pauline mysticism as a "dying and rising with Christ," says that he recognizes three deadly sins. These are the most serious since they destory the mystical union with Christ.[1] They are: unchastity,[2] acceptance of circumcision after baptism,[3] and partaking in heathen feasts.[4] It is to be noted that the first of these has to do with the flesh. The significance seems to be that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that to contaminate it with lust means to make it unfit for habitation by the Spirit, and hence destroys the mystical union with Christ. The second deadly sin is putting one's faith in the Law rather than in Christ. The mystical union can be maintained only when Christ is the supreme object of faith. The third deadly sin needs a bit more attention. Schweitzer bases his proposition on 1 Cor-

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1. Schweitzer, Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, 130
2. 1 Cor. 6: 13-19
3. Gal. 5: 4
4. 1 Cor. 10: 20-21

inthians 10: 20-21. "But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have communion with demons. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: Ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord and of the table of demons." But the rest of the chapter suggests that this partaking in heathen feasts is to be judged in the light of its social effect upon the consciences of the weaker brethren. However, the strong language of these two verses cannot be disregarded, for they are even more striking in the Greek. οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι carries the significance of "I do not will that you should be comrades, (or partners) of the demons." κοινωνός means an associate and κοινωνία is used of the closest of human relationships, in the contemporary documents.[1] We are now faced with the tast of interpreting what Paul means. He seems to be referring in these two verses, at least, to the idea that evil and holiness are contagious.[2] But can this be harmonized with the

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1. Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, I, 351
2. This is further emphasized in 1 Corinthians 11: 27-30. "Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep."

view expressed in the later part of the chapter? They can be if we are willing to accept the following paraphrase:

"To participate in a heathen feast in which sacrifices are offered to idols, means that you participate in the worship of these idols, and I do not want you to become partners of the demons. The table of the Lord and the tables of the idols are contrary to each other and the acceptance of one means the denial of the other. It is impossible to sincerely enter into, and take part in both. However, idol meats and feasts with unbelievers do not always have to be avoided if one understands that the Lord is supreme in all things. In this situation, let the effect which your action will have upon your brother, be the criterion by which you decide your action." This is not entirely satisfactory, but it seems the best that can be done. Here, as in some other places, Paul is not entirely consistant with himself.

Individual Emphasis

Sin is primarily personal and individualistic, though it is unfair to say that the social, ethical aspect is altogether lacking. He says "And thus sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ."[1] Be ye

1. 1 Cor. 8: 12

angry and sin not (?) Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."[1] A wrong relationship with others is sin and anger is to be reconciled at once. Faith manifests itself in works and one must do good, for the time will come when he must face the one "who will render to every man according to his works."[2]

But it must be asserted that the social nature of sin is not the predominate one in Paul. One has to take his ethical teaching more by implication than by any direct statements. The fact that many people have missed the ethical element in Paul's teaching regarding sin, shows that it is not entirely plain. But the statement of Schweitzer appears to me to be true: "The believer, by his will, should progressively make into a reality his death to the flesh and sin, and his being ruled in his thinking and acting by the new life-principles of the Spirit. He will show by his ethical conduct how far the dying and rising again with Christ has proceeded in him."[3] Paul can also say, "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."[4]

Certainly sin to Paul was something which out not to be. "His view of sin is contained essentially

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1. Eph. 4: 26
2. Rom. 2: 6
3. Schweitzer, Mysticism of the Apostle Paul, 291
4. Gal. 5: 14

in its name, a missing of the mark. That describes it as in its idea unnatural as something that ought not to be, something deviating from the right line; the name at once gives the thing the stamp of contradiction to God and his holy will."[1]

Ἁμαρτία is anything which makes a man blind to the plan and will of God. It is the overwhelming force which pushes a man beyond the reach of God and his mercy. It is sometimes rebelling against a known positive command as in Rom. 4: 15, and Gal. 3: 18, though the term used in these references is παράβασις. The term παράπτωμα is sometimes used for an unconscious error or sin. This power which makes a man miss the mark, Paul found too strong for him to conquer in himself. The Law could indicate what sin was, but only in Christ did he find the needed strength to overcome it.

Universal Nature of Sin

This force which has entered into men and made them "miss the mark," is a universal power. Adam, as the father of the race, allowed it to steal into humanity and from him it passed unto all men. The Jew was willing to admit that all of the Gentiles had sinned, but Paul insists that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."[2] Both Jew and Greek

1. Porter, article, "The Yecer Hara etc.", 49
2. Rom. 3: 23

need a righteousness not their own, and through Christ, the glory lost by Adam is restored to men.[1]

This issue of sin being universal and including even the Jews, caused him some trouble with his own people. But he says, "We being Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles, yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."[2] True, the Jew started with an advantage in that he had been given the Law, but he was no more able to remove the barrier between himself and God, than was the Gentile. For this false pride in themselves as favorites of God, Paul attacks them as those "who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove out us, and please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved; to fill up their sins always: but the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."[3] While the Jews had forbidden that the Gentiles should be approached with a view to their salvation, Paul turns upon them

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1. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C., 84
2. Gal. 2: 15-16
3. 1 Thes. 2: 15-16

and places them in the same class with the Gentiles as sinners before God.

The nature of sin is such that no man has been able to escape it. At the foundation of the doctrine of the universal nature of the Gospel, lies the insistance upon the universal need of men. So the Apostle can carry the Gospel to the Gentiles and can insist upon the need of the Jews for it also, "for we before laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin."[1]

Sin and Death

Even as Paul conceived sin as something external and objective, so he also regards death. Death, to him, is an external force, like an evil spirit, that uses sin as its instrument.[2] When sin entered into humanity through Adam's trespass, death also entered into human experience.

As in his concept of the origin of sin, so in his concept of the relation of sin and death, Paul is definitely Jewish. Here he reflects his Jewish background and training, and contributex little that is new. In 4 Ezra, both physical and spiritual death are traced to Adam, who brought in death, through his sin. This is also the view expressed in the book of

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1. Rom. 3: 9
2. Scott, article, "Romans," Abingdon Commentary, 1142

Baruch.[1] The statement is made, "Because when Adam sinned and death was decreed against those who shall be born, then the multitude of those who should be born was numbered, and for that number a place was prepared where the living might dwell and the dead might be guarded."[2] So also in the Similitudes of Enoch, death is traced back to its origin in the sin of Adam.[3]

Paul does not always use the term in the same sense. There are times when he is very obviously using it in a figurative manner such as "but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."[4] He is evidently putting into striking language, his own experience with the Law. Again he says, "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"[5] This should be the state of all true believers in Christ. As far as desire and response is concerned, sin should find us dead. We are no longer living persons so far as sin is concerned.

When he refers to the origin of death, he speaks in the same languages as do the apocalyptic writers. "Therefore as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin: and so death passed unto all men; for that all sinned."[6] It is plain

1. Baruch 48: 42
2. Baruch 23: 4
3. Hughes, Ethics of Jewish Apocalyptic Literature, 172
4. Rom. 7: 9b
5. Rom. 6: 2
6. Rom. 5: 12

that his thought regarding death is practically the same as it is regarding sin, at least as to origin. Adam's trespass allowed death, the objective thing, to slip into humanity. Since all men sinned in Adam's sin, death was then enabled to pass unto all men universally.

He says, "that as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."[1] The question arises as to whether we are to interpret "death," as referring to the spiritual or to the physical. Sanday in the I.C.C. believes that ὁ θάνατος refers to physical death since his reference to death reigning from Adam to Moses in verse 14, seems to suggest physical death. However, I doubt that Paul himself could always tell as to just what phase of death he referred. To him, death means that which separates a man from God.[2] Death in all of its manifestations is that which cuts a man off from the Divine Life. In all its manifestations, both physical and spiritual death is caused by sin.[3] Death, like sin is something which ought not to be. The great work of Christ in Paul's mind, is the conquering of death and the bringing unto sinful men,

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1. Rom. 5: 21
2. Beyschlag, New Testament Theology, II, 55
3. Gardner, The Religious Experience of St. Paul, 50

life eternal.

The very close relationship between death and sin, is brought out by the fact that he sometimes presents one as the cause of the other, and at other times he puts it in the other way. For example, he says, "The sting of death is sin."[1] That is, death is the penalty for rebellion against God, and the presence of death means the presence of sin. He can also say, "For the wages of sin is death."[2] Here he takes an illustration that was familiar to his readers. The man who is a slave of sin, receives for his ration money (οψώνια) or wages, death, Death, then, means sin, and sin brings as its result, death. This is his emphasis consistantly. If one endulges in sin, then he will reap as his reward, death. But if a man becomes a slave of righteousness, then he shall overcome death and receive life eternal. "Know ye not that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"[3] To Paul, the great glory of the Gospel lies in its final conquest of sin and its fruits, so that he is confident that even death, since it is a result of sin, will finally be vanquished. "The last enemy that shall be abolished is death."[4]

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1. 1 Cor. 15: 56
2. Rom. 6: 23
3. Rom. 6: 16
4 1 Cor. 15: 26

SIN AND THE FLESH (σάρξ)

Paul's Over emphasis of this Aspect of Sin.

A great antipathy has grown up against Paul on account of his emphasis on the relationship between sin and the body. The significance of fleshly lust in Paul's mind as evil, is apparent to anyone reading his letters. His use of the term is a wide one, and it is easy to get the impression that sin as far as Paul is concerned means giving way to physical desires. He almost appears to be preaching a doctrine of acetiscism in which the ideal Christian is one who lives apart from the world. Because of this emphasis, some have come to regard the Apostle as one whose attitude towards life was not altogether healthy, and whose influence has had more bad effects than good ones. This is one of the chief arguments of those who insist that Christianity has gone astray in following Paul, and must get back to the attitudes of Jesus.

This is particularly true in our own day. In many quarters any suggestion of a dualism between body and spirit is regarded as a product of an old and outworn psychology. We are prone to think of the body and its desires as perfectly normal and natural, and henceforth, we feel that they should be given expression. The harmful effects of putting the body

under strict control and refusing to give expression to our instincts, are clearly portrayed. "It is thus seen, according to Freud, that all manner of physical harm results from repressions growing out of the conflict between the natural instinct impulses and the reality principle of the consciousness, a conflict which is unnecessary."[1]

Our purpose is neither to champion nor condemn Paul, but merely to find out exactly what he meant, and then to inquire into the reasons for his teachings. This is not always easy to do, but in the case of the teaching of the flesh, it seems to me that Paul is fairly consistent. In general, therefore, it should be possible to gain an idea as to what he means by the term. However, it is used in an extremely wide manner, and there are times when we cannot be sure just how far we are justified in expanding, or limiting his meaning.

In this phase of his doctrine, Paul was evidently deeply influenced by his Greek environment. The idea of sin as originating with Adam, the first man, is the Jewish theory which attempts to solve the problem of how sin came into being in the first place. Paul follows that theory as best explaining the origin of sin. But his idea that men are prone to sin be-

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1. Barbour, Sin and the New Psychology, 47

cause of the carnal nature, is Greek, and Paul seeks to harmonize the two.[1] His whole conception of the battle between spirit and flesh is a different concept than that of Judaism.[2] The ancient Greek thinkers from Plato onward, regarded the flesh as the center of sin, "matter phenomenal, transient, and mortal, working against the eternal and real element, the body the prison of the soul."[3]

Whether Paul is to be thought of as an exponent of the dualism of the Greeks is a question of argument. There are times, so it seems, when he is to be regarded as exactly this. Two spirits are in the world striving for mastery. Christ is the good spirit, and Sin is the evil one. The Good works through the mind and the will, while the Evil works through the flesh.[4] Then there are other times when he shades off a bit, and seems to have a more unified idea, and then he comes closer to the Jewish concept of the two impulses within the man.[5] Be that as it may, he always regards the flesh with suspicion and is conscious that here is the center of his conflict with sin.

He uses σάρξ in a general sense as one might

1. Gardner, The Religious Experience of St. Paul, ch. 8
2. Beyschlag, New Testament Theology, 132 ff
3. Glover, Paul of Tarsus, 79
4. Rom. 7: 25
5. Rom. 6: 12

speak of materiality or fleshliness. It usually stands for the material, or the physical as opposed to the spiritual. When he is speaking of a particular body, he brings into use the word σῶμα. This needs to be constantly borne in mind. For while there are many instances when Paul is speaking of the localized physical body, he often uses the flesh as a general term for man's lower nature. σάρξ to him, is the principle of sin manifesting itself in fleshly lust.

Reasons For This Emphasis

Why, we may ask, did St. Paul so emphasize this aspect of sin at the expense of other things that needed attention? For example, why did he not make more of economic questions? There are several possible explanations for his emphasis on the sins of the flesh. For one thing, as an aristocrat himself, that is having come from a good family and a fairly secure economic and social position, he probably was not as moved by social and economic evils, as he would have been had he been raised in poverty, and had he been a member of the submerged classes. These were questions which were not the vigal, commanding ones, as far as he was concerned. But as a member of the strict sect of the Pharisees, he was very much aware of impurity and unchastity.

It is to be remembered that many of the physical

sins for which he is so concerned, were condoned, or at least regarded lightly by the world in which he lived. As a Jew who highly regarded ceremonial and moral cleanliness, these things must have caused him much pain. So he became tremendously zealous, that those who followed Christ, should not allow their bodies to become contaminated with the popular vices of the day.

He himself had experienced this passionate desire for purity, and he knew how hard it was to obtain. He had experienced the great power of the flesh to make him act even against his own will. I think that it was because he was so conscious of this conflict in his own nature, that he stressed it so greatly in his letters to the churches. And there were no doubt cases of immorality being brought to his attention, as in the case of the church at Corinth. This, he felt, must be kept out at any cost, and it was truly a herculean task to which he had set himself, when one considers the continual pressure of society and the converting of new men, who had come fresh from that environment.

The expectation of the nearness of the Parousia, also sheds some light upon this matter. There is much to be said for the position of Albert Schweitzer.[1] He

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1. Schweitzer, Mysticism of the Apostle Paul

suggests that the teachings of Paul are like a spider web. If they are attached to the two poles of the death and resurrection of Jesus, on the one hand, and the expectation of an immediate Parousia, on the other, then they are clear and meaningful. But if they are separated from either of these poles, they become a hopeless jumble. The present problem is a case at point. If Paul was expecting the coming of Jesus in the very near future, then the important thing was not the activities of the government, nor the complicated economic and social questions. But purity of body was important. Chastity was a necessary prerequisite for the final mystical union with Christ. On this basis, then, the flesh becomes the chief enemy of man, as well as the center and chief instrument of sin.

He attacks with vigor, the sin of fornication. Says he, "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."[1] The underlying reason for this attack, seems to be the feeling that the body has an immortal destiny in Christ. Libertines thus make their bodies unfit habitations for the Holy Spirit, and destroy the mystical union with Christ.[2] Paul regards the body as the expression of the whole personality. In this respect, he is certainly not a

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1. 1 Cor. 6: 18
2. Robertson & Plummer, 1 Corinthians, I.C.C.

dualist, but rather insists upon the essential unity of a man. "This sin of fornication differs from every other kindof sin in that it involves a man's whole personality. The coming together of man and woman is not merely a physical union, but a psychological blending. And a transcient union implies the disintegration of personality. For the Christian it also involves an impossible contradiction; for he is joined to the Lord, and therefore 'one spirit with him.' "[1] The body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and Paul felt that in dishonoring it, a man sinned against his whole personality.

Take for example his list of sins in Galatians 5: 19-21. Here he deals with sin under four heads. First come the sexual vices such as fornication, moral impurity and wantoness. Secondly he speaks of heathen worship with idolatry and sorcery. Then comes the sins of faction such an enmity and strife. Last, he swings again to the sins of the flesh, particularly those of the appetite such as drunken debauchery, etc. If one studies any list of vices which Paul singles out for particular attention, one is impressed with the important place he gives to sins of the body.

This so-called dualism of St. Paul, seems to sug-

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1. Scott, Christianity According to St. Paul, 209

gest that the soul is imprisoned within the body and that salvation is possible only when power is achieved to control the body. It has been said that this idea comes from the Orphic Mystery Religion and the Greek tradition.[1] In his conception of sin, his starting point is realism, and he found the realistic experience of sin in the body. But there is one distinction that needs to be kept always in mind, namely, that flesh in itself is not sinful.

Flesh Not in Itself Sinful.

The flesh is particularly susceptible to sin, and is used by sin, but the flesh in itself, that is in its essential nature, is not necessarily sinful. This is shown by several considerations. For one thing, Paul holds to the Jewish conception, that Adam was originally sinless. He also insists upon the human body of Jesus, but at the same time regards him as sinless.[2] Paul does not take the Gnostic view that all Matter is evil and that only the Spirit is capable of being sinless. He says, "Having therefore these promises beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."[3] That the body not only can, but should be used for holy things, is brought out in the

1. Macchioro, From Orpheus To Paul, 198
2. Moore, Religious Thought of the Greeks, 330 ff
3. 2 Cor. 7: 1

the words, "But the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body."[1] Again he says, "Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?"[2]

This, Paul feels, is the way the thing should work out, namely, that the body as well as the spirit should serve the Law of God. But in his actual experience it has not been thus. "So then I of myself with the mind, indeed, serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."[3] Here is a keen analysis of his moral struggle, and there is no doubt in my own mind but that this represents his own experience. Particularly is this a picture of his pre-conversion condition, but it is also his experience even after his relationship with Christ. For he continually felt sin as a possibility hovering over all of his actions, and sometimes it broke into reality through his flesh. This is perhaps what Wieman means when he suggests that it is not likely that we shall ever remove evil, at least from the realm of probability.[4] Paul's struggle is that of two natures or impulses, fighting for mastery.[5] He is seeking an inner harmony which he finds in his experience with Christ. But it is a

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1. 1 Cor. 6: 13
2. 1 Cor. 6: 15
3. Rom. 7: 25
4. Wieman, God and Evil, Earl Lecture
5. Porter, The Mind of Christ in Paul, 61

a harmony of tension and to a certain extent, restlessness. He can never fully trust the flesh, and he knows that the slightest relaxation means that sin breaks forth in the flesh.

But wherein he was under the power of his flesh, Paul is now convinced that the body can be used for only pure purposes through the power of Christ. He does not say that one cannot sin any longer, but he does point out that sin in the flesh can be controlled. "For when we were in the flesh the sinful passions which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."[1] This was the situation before the coming of Christ, but now he can urge men to "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof."[2] .....neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness."[3] Thus it may be seen, that running through all of Paul's Letters, there is the consciousness that the flesh is extremely susceptible to the control of sin, but there is also the insistance that the flesh can be kept pure through the help of the power of Christ.

It is to be noted that Paul's disillusionment with the Law came about because of its inability to give

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1. Rom. 7: 5
2. Rom. 6: 12
3. Rom. 6: 13

him pure motives and to control his mind. We may then ask why the manifestations of sin in the flesh looms so large in his thinking. We have already discussed the possible explanations for this, but one last word needs to be spoken. We must not interpret this phase of Paul's teaching too literalistically. This has led us to wrong theological conceptions, based on a misunderstanding of the Apostle's real meaning. σάρξ is very often used as a figure of speech, indicating the unworthy elements in human personality. Of course it is not always to be interpreted thus. In my judgment, after recognizing that σάρξ is often times used figuratively, still, the relationship between ἁμαρτία and σάρξ, is stressed out of proportion. If followed out to a logical conclusion, this teaching would lead to asceticism. Paul himself does not do this since human relationships do appeal to him. "for in him, the man is much greater than the ascetic."[1]

Marriage and Its Relations to Sin

Under the general head, "Sin and the Flesh" a brief word needs to be spoken concerning Paul's attitude towards marriage, as it is related to the subject. Again,he can best be understood in terms of the expectation of an immediate Parousia. He is giving

1. Gardner, The Religious Experience of St. Paul, 166

advice in terms of a short space of time, and not a policy which he expected would have to be followed through the centuries.[1] Under the influence of this view, he gives a grudging consent to marriage, He clearly indicates that in his opinion, it is better to remain unmarried, but rather than to be tempted into evil sexual relations, it is better to marry. "But I say to the unmarried and to widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they have not continency let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn."[2] Here again, he is speaking of sin in terms of fleshly lust. It is best to live the celibate life, but it is better to have lawful sex relations than unlawful.

Paul evidently recognizes the raging physical passions of man. Marriage controls such passions, or at least keeps them lawful. But he cannot trust the flesh even here, entirely, and he only gives his half-hearted consent in the words: "But shouldst thou marry, thous hast not sinned."[3]

The same general spirit is present in the difficult passage, 1 Corinthians 7: 36. "But if any man thinketh that he behaveth unsemly towards his virgin maid if she be past the flower of her age, and if need so requireth, let him do what he will; he sinneth not;

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1. 1 Cor. 7: 29-31
2. 1 Cor. 7: 8-9
3. 1 Cor. 7: 28

let them marry." Moffatt translates παρθένον as "bethrothed maid." The I.C.C. says that γαμίζω means "to give in marriage" and hence the verse refers to a father or guardian giving his consent to the marriage of his daughter or ward. But Moulton and Milligan[1] from contemporary documents, prove that γαμίζω as well as γαμέω may mean "to marry" rather than "to give in marriage." Hence the translation of the verse may be interpreted as referring to a father and his giving or witholding his consent to the marriage of his daughter, or it may refer to a man and his decision in marrying a maiden. Be that as it may, the point as far as we are concerned in this present study is clear. It is better not to be married or to give in marriage, but rather than fall into lust, let marriage take place, since it is not a sin. From this brief survey it is to be seen that Paul does not wholeheartedly approve of marriage, but regards it as the best possible substitute for something worse. This attitude is largely accounted for on the basis of his distrust of the flesh, no doubt heightened by his own ascetic mode of life and strong emotional impulses.

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1. Moulton & Milligan, Vocabulary of the Greek Testament " " "

SIN AND LAW

The Purpose of the Law

The relation of the Law to the Gospel, was one of the most knotty problems with which Paul had to deal. This was partly due to the conflicting emotions within his own thinking. As a strict Pharisee of the Pharisees, he had been trained to regard the Law with highest respect, reverence, and devotion. It embodied the great ideal and the fundamental relgion conceptions of his race. One does not rid himself of such a deep feeling of respect and love, even though he goes through an experience as revolutionary as the conversion of Paul. For his own peace of mind, some harmony had to be found between the Law and Christ.

But even if he might have disregarded it himself, the Jews were continually demanding an answer to the question. What relation had the Law to Paul's relgion? What was the relation of the Law to the Gentiles? Did the coming of Christ invalidate the Law? These and many other questions were clamoring for answers, and it is to be noted that Paul found a satisfactory attitude for himself, at least, in the relation between the Law and sin.

Paul never says anything against the Law as being untrue. His disillusionment with it had not come about because he regarded it as being too low in its ideals, nor did he question its validity for the Jews. But he

found his great disappointment in its failure as a system of salvation. In this respect, it had proved woefully inadequate, and if a man really hungered and thirsted for righteousness, it would drive him to despair. He strongly attacks it, as that by which men can be saved, or as that in which men have trusted for their redemption.

That the Law has come from God is not doubted, but it has come from God in order to bring about a recognition of sin and not as a system of salvation. Without the Law, men commit many acts for which they are not responsible since they know not that their actions are sinful. The Law makes the blackness of evil and the whiteness of good, clear cut and distinct. It gives knowledge of right and wrong, and thus brings with it, responsibility and punishment. It is in fact the national conscience of the Jews and through it, God has shown man his imperfections.

"What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made;"[1] This is its function, then, until the coming of the Promised One. It is to be noted that Paul uses the term παράβασις, rather than ἁμαρτία. The significance of this, is that Paul is referring to the violation of an explicit command, and not a following of the more general evil impulse.

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1. Gal. 3: 19

The purpose of the Law is to make men recognize the sinfulness of their deeds, and hence responsible for them. "For through the Law cometh the knowledge of sin." (ἁμαρτία)[1]

He makes the matter even more specific when he says," for the law worketh wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there transgression."[2] From his own experience he generalizes as to the Jews in general. The wrong act done in ignorance does not constitute a transgression. But when the Law is present, a man has a guide as to his conduct, and the direct breaking of a law becomes a most serious matter. "For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law."[3] Thus, Paul insists that the Law did not create sin, nor does it promise deliverance from sin. Its purpose is simply to create a consciousness of sin and so it becomes a standard, or a measuring rod that distinguished between the good and the bad.

But sin found the Law useful in devastating human nature. The suggestion is, that when men learn what right is, they have an overwhelming desire todo wrong. Yet this does not happen because men are morally bad or because they will to do evil. It happens because

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1. Rom. 3: 20
2. Rom. 4: 15
3. Rom. 5: 13

sin, objectively personified, attacks them with new force and stronger temptation. It now lures them into forbidden paths, which it was unable to do when men were not clearly certain as to what was the right path. Sin becomes a subtle tempter, working unceasingly and unmercifully through the weakness of the flesh, until a man finally gives up in despair and sin conquers. "For sin, finding occasion through the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me."[1] Here is the Apostle's own experience and one is struck with the similarity of the experience with that of Adam in the Garden of Eden. In both instances sin is a tempter, and finally succeeds because of the magnetic power of forbidden things.

". . . but sin, finding occasion wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting; for apart from the law, sin is dead."[2] He uses the expression ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα which suggests getting a start, or in military language, "finding a base of operations."[3] In the strongest terms which he can find, Paul puts this thought into words. It was the Law which drove him to despair because the more certain he was of what was wrong, the more compelling became the urge to do it. "And I was alive apart from the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died."[4] The

1. Rom. 7: 11
2. Rom. 7: 8
3. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C. 179
4. Rom. 7: 9

word used is ἀνέζησεν . The knowledge of the Law made sin "spring into life" in his experience. Romans 7: 9-11 is the story of paradise in his own experience."[1]

To briefly sum up this phase then, we may say that Paul did not depart from his Hebrew training in his conception of the Law.[2] He regards it with highest respect as a source of knowledge and recognizes its validity in this realm. But it is also an irritant to sin.[3] From his observation, he concludes that so far as saving men from sin was concerned, the Law failed to function. "And the law came in besides, that the trespass might abound."[4] In actual working out, the Law created more sin, because it converted into deliberate transgressions acts which otherwise would not have had that significance. "The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law."[5] It is in fact, an unwitting ally of sin.

But Paul goes out of his way to make clear that he does not regard the Law as evil in itself. "Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin that it might be shown to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good: that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful."[6] The fact that the Law has made Paul

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1. Beyschlag, New. Testament Theology, ch. 3
2. Macchioro, From Orpheus to Paul, 195
3. Bruce, St. Paul's Conception of Christianity, 143
4. Rom. 5: 20
5. 1 Cor. 15: 56
6. Rom. 7: 13

more conscious of sin, and in fact, more of a sinner, does not reflect upon the Law, but rather upon the horror of sin. Here is an example of it taking that which was of divine origin and perverting it to its own evil designs. This then, is a splendid example for the whole world to observe to what extremities sin is capable. The experience of Paul did not make him regard the Law with less respect, but rather it made him regard sin with even greater hatred. "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting except the law had said, Though shalt not covet."[1] With this statement, the orthodox Jew may have been a bit horrified,[2] but Paul goes just as far as he can to make clear his high opinion of the Law.

Sin in Relationship To Knowledge

Another implication that can be drawn from Paul's discussion of the relation of the Law to sin, is the suggestion that the seriousness of sin is dependent upon the amount of knowledge possessed. A sin committed in ignorance does not carry with it the same penalty as one committed in knowledge. This is the signi-

1. Rom. 7: 7
2. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C. 179

ficance of the Law, namely, that it has changed ἁμαρτία, "a missing the mark." To παράβασις, "a transgression." Thus, guilt will be judged and punishment administered according to the knowledge.

This thought is brought out clearly in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. After picturing the immoral society of the heathen, he turns with the biting attack of Amos upon the Jews themselves.[1] What right have they who have the Ten Commandments to sit back and judge others by them, and at the same time commit the acts which the Commandments expressly forbid? He then goes on to state this doctrine which to the Jews must have appeared very liberal, "For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without the law: and as many as have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law; for not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified; (for when Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are the law unto themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them); in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ."[2]

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1. Scott, "Romans," Abingdon Bible Commentary, 1141
2. Rom. 2: 12-16

The heathen have not been favored to the extent to which the Jews have been, but they do have a law written in their hearts and given to them by God. This law is their conscience. While it may be inferior to the law of the Jews, nevertheless it gives them knowledge as to what is right or wrong. This, of course, was very much opposed to current orthodox Judaism, for it taught that the uncircumcised could do nothing that was pleasing to God.[1] Paul insists that God shall judge them according to their light. The Law, then, becomes a sort of boomerang. If the Jews are favored of God because they have been given the keeping of divine precepts, they will also have to give a stricter account for their sin, since the seriousness of sin is reckoned in relation to the knowledge present. Thus does the voice of Israel's prophecy, re-echo in the voice of the great Christian Apostle.

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1. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C., 62

CHRIST AND SIN

The Meaning of Christ and Paul's Consciousness of Sin

The further one studies into the main concepts of Paul's theology, the more one is impressed with the significance of his concept of sin. This, it appears, is the fundamental, basic fact with which he begins. Sin forms the binding strand for his other main ideas. This is no where more clearly exemplified, than in his teaching concerning Christ.

Again we need to go back to the experience of the young Pharisee who was disillusioned and filled with despair. He had an overwhelming desire to be righteous, yet the more he strove for it, the more it seemed to elude his grasp. The Law clearly showed to him the standard which he ought to attain, but in actual living, sin ruled him so that he knew that he stood before God as a trespasser. Then against his will and training, he comes into an experience through Christ which raises him above the tyranny of sin and makes him its master. From then on, try as he will, he cannot adequately express the tremendous thing that has happened to him. Christ becomes everything to him because through Christ he feels himself freed from the horror of being a sinner before God.

We cannot adequately understand the meaning of Christ to Paul, unless we first understand the meaning of sin to him. The glory of his experience in Christ

is directly dependable upon the seriousness with which he felt sin in his life. Sin was to him the arch-enemy which, even when he would do good, forced him into evil. With all the strength at his command he had aimed for righteousness, but sin made him "miss the mark." He saw it as an unsurmountable barrier which shut him off from God. But somehow in his experience of Christ, he found this force put down. All of his teaching concerning Christ, is an attempt to explain this experience. "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. I do not make void the grace of God: for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought."[1] This is the feeling running all through the Letters of Paul: namely, to say that which can never be adequately or plainly said. He strives to put into words a deep and abiding spiritual experience and we are unjust if we seek to build a theology upon, or to literalize these difficult sayings.

The Meaning of the Death of Jesus

We must remember that Paul first regarded Jesus as a false teacher. But after he had accepted him as

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1. Gal. 2: 20-21

the Messiah, he must then find the purpose and meaning of his death. He found it in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah.[1] "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."[2] So in the death of Jesus, Paul finds the great messages of sacrifice and reconciliation. Through the death of Christ, we find forgiveness and cleansing for our sins.

In formulating this idea, Paul is influenced by his Jewish training.[3] The idea of the good suffering for and justifying the wicked before God, comes from the Second Isaish, and while that writer refers to the Nation, Paul sees in it a vision of Christ's work and death ". . . and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, 'there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer,', He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins."[4] The suggestion here seems to be that Christ removes sin not only from the individual, but from the Nation as well. Jesus, then, was truly Israel's Messiah and through him the

1. Headlam, St. Paul and Christianity, 74
2. Isaiah 53: 12
3. Moore, Religious Thought of the Greeks, 312
4. Rom. 11: 26-27

people will be purified and thus God will forgive them. That the death of an individual, if he is repentent, expiates his sin, is a Jewish doctrine,[1] and from this it was easy to see Israel's Messiah as an individual.

This is common in post-apostolic literature. "How long will that which is corruptible remain, and how long will the time of mortals be prospered, and until what time will those who transgress in the world be polluted with much wickedness?"[2] Then later comes the answer: ". . . and My Messiah will convict him of all his impieties, and will gather and set before him all the works of his hosts . . . .And his principate will stand for ever, until the aforesaid are fulfilled."[3] Thus there is to be found in Jewish literature the belief that the Messiah, who will be an individual of God's choosing, will destroy evil and set up his kingdom of righteousness. Paul believes that this has happened with the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Paul no doubt made his contributions to this idea and perhaps expanded, or particularized it, but in its essence, it seems to have been a primitive Christian belief, already formulated when Paul was converted.

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1. Moore, Judaism, I, 546 ff.
2. Baruch 21: 19
3. Ibid 40: 1, 3

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."[1] To a greater or lesser degree, what happened in the mind of Paul, evidently had also happened in the minds of the Disciples. From their experience came the assurance that Jesus was God's Son. But could they then explain his death? They found their answer in the "suffering servant" passages and Paul was initiated into this teaching upon being accepted as a follower of Christ.

The Authority of Christ's Death and Resurrection

Paul carries the thing back to God who works through Jesus. In the mind of Paul, the Law came from God and was valid. But the love of God did not desire that men should remain in their sins as they were bound to do under the Law. However, the Law must be satisfied and this can only be done through the sacrifice of the highest and best. God, then, in a sense tangled up in his own Law, has to satisfy that Law, which he does by the gift of his Son. "But God commendeth his own love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."[2]

But if this death of Jesus signifies the love of God, on the one hand, it also shows the beautiful, self-

1. 1 Cor. 15: 3
2. Rom. 5: 8

sacrificing spirit of Christ. "Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father."[1] Christ is no automaton in this matter but of his own will, voluntarily, he lays down his life that he may save the people from their sins by fulfilling the demands of the Law.[2]

Paul is careful to insist that this new life, free from sin, is founded upon an authority as valid as that of the Law. "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death."[3] Here, he makes his point by using νόμος in two different senses. The old law is then superceded by a new law, conceived as an "authority producing regulated action."[4] The new authority has a power and strength which the old law never knew, for while the old law could merely set the standards, but gave no help in overcoming the flesh and thus measuring up to the new standards, the new authority in Christ enables a man to rule his flesh and overcome his sin.

But the death of Christ is not enough, for that suggests the victory of sin. But if Christ has died as a sacrifice for sin, and then lives again to show that

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1. Gal. 1: 3-4
2. Burton, Epistle to the Galatians, I.C.C., 12
3. Rom. 8: 2
4. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C., 191

he is the final victor, then sin is for all time vanquished and men can be free through faith in Christ. ". . .and if Christ hath not been raised,your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."[1] It is a living Christ that has saved Paul from his sin and in writing to the Corinthians, his suggestion is, that only a living Christ could have saved them from their heathen ways. The underlying basis of his belief lies in his own experience.

These two aspects are to be found in Paul's thinking concerning Christ: first, because of man's sin, Christ died, and secondly, through his resurrection, he forever conquered sin. "For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God."[2] Sin hung around his neck and caused his death but that also meant sin's death. But the glorious thing is life, which the living Christ has imparted to all who believe on him. "And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins."[3] All of his teaching concerning the resurrection is an attempt to explain his experience of the Living Christ.

The Sinlessness of Jesus

One of the things which Paul feels is certainly true, and yet finds difficult to put into words, is

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1. 1 Cor. 15: 17
2. Rom. 6: 10
3. Eph. 2: 1

the identification of Christ with sin in his death, and yet his own personal sinlessness. On the one hand, Christ feels the power of sin and is tempted and yet he does not yield. However, he accepts man's sin and dies for it that he may be a sacrifice for it. "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him."[1] Here, Christ, is clearly identified with sinful humanity. Yet even here there is the feeling that Paul recognizes the presence of a mystery that cannot altogether be explained. The sinlessness of Jesus is recognized and yet in some manner, God makes him to become sinfor us. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."[2] The phrase σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας may be translated as "sin's flesh" and means that Christ had a physical body like all men. In them it had fallen under the power of sin, but because he remained without sin though he was in the flesh, he pronounced the doom on sin.[3] Whatever may be the difficulties in the way of understanding the intricacies

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1. 2 Cor. 5: 21
2. Rom. 8: 3
3. Scott, article, "Romans", Abingdon Commentary, 1153

of his argument in its particulars, the general sense is clear. By the act of Christ dying for sin, though he himself was sinless, sin in the flesh was conquered and we too may have the same experience by mystically dying and rising with Christ. The believer shares this experience through faith.

The idea that Christ could have sinned or have been a minister of sin in any respect is absurd to the mind of Paul. "But if while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ a minister of sin? God forbid.!"[1] He is here arguing against Peter and suggests that if Christ had inspired him to eat with the Gentiles, and then Peter had decided that this was sin, it really meant that Peter was suggesting that Christ had encouraged him in sin. Throughout his correspondence, the thought is always assumed, that Christ is not to be regarded in any way as having been contaminated with sin.

Christ was the end of the Law and through him we are sons of God and no longer slaves, because he is the exemplification of the love of God.[2] The spirit of Christ is the thing of which he is now conscious and not the law of flesh. Christ's death and resurrection meant that the material could no longer rule the spiritual, so long as the mystical ex-

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1. Gal. 2: 17
2. Porter, The Mind of Christ in Paul, 125

perience of dying and rising with Christ were maintained. To him it is like coming out of death into life. "Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus."[1]

Christ the Fulfillment of the Law

A hasty reading may give the impression that Christ is the antithesis of the Law. But as has already been suggested, this is not the case. In Paul's thinking, Christ is the higher revelation of God, or perhaps it is better to say that the Law is the preparation for the coming of Christ. "But the scripture shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."[2] The Law came from God to show men that it is impossible to be justified by merit. He seems to recognize that one cannot fully appreciate what Christ has brought, unless he has suffered despair of sin, under the Law. Thus he can still hold to the divine origin of the Law, and at the same time believe that it has been superceded. Christ is to him the new and crowning revelation of God's willingness to forgive men their sin.

Bondage of Sin Before Christ

Paul lived in a world of slavery which if he did

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1. Rom. 6: 11
2. Gal. 3: 22

not condone, at least he did not openly condemn. From this condition so common to the people of his day, he find a striking figure of speech which he applies to several matters. Here he finds the phrase by which he can best explain the condition of men under the law.[1] Again he uses it in proclaiming men's relations to idols, saying, "Howbeit at that time, not knowing God, ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods."[2] Men were slaves to men but, "Ye were bought with a price; become not bondservants of men."[3] We have already seen his wide use of the figure in relation to death, and in like words he pictures man's relationship to sin, which caused death.

With a keen eye he sees and portrays and moral struggle of man, as he himself has experienced it. The consciousness of goodness and the sincere desire to be good, has not been absent, but the impulse for evil has simply been more powerful and has conquered the good impulse. The result of this defeat was a state of slavery wherein Paul felt himself to be under captivity to a master whom he hated. "But I see a different law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of which which is in my members."[4] This was his condition before his

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1. Gal. 4: 1-7
2. Gal. 4: 8
3. 1 Cor. 7: 23
4. Rom. 7: 23

experience in Christ, and any man who has had the desire for purity but has stumbled through the mud in response to a power which seems to rule him against his will knows that Paul has found the right word when he calls such a condition "captivity." It is the condition of a man who hears the call of the moral law, but is under the control of his passions.

He has already set the struggle forth in the words, "for the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise. But if what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me."[1] Here, it seems, he is giving his experience when under the Law, for he begins in the next chapter with a description of his experience under the rule of Christ. Flesh as the seat of sin has proved stronger than the mind, and he is convinced that there is no hope for a man without the help of Christ. Here is slavery with a vengeance, for a man is subject to a power which he would defy, but cannot.

If a man be mastered by sin, then righteousness has no control over him. In this respect, Paul does not recognize any compromise. A man is not a slave to more than one master, for whoever owns him, claims his allegiance. A slave has no right to come and go as he pleases, and he cannot decide whom he will serve. Whether he likes it or not, he serves his owner and he cannot recognize or follow any other command. "For

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1. Rom. 7: 19-20

when ye were servants (slaves) of sin, ye were free in regard to righteousness."[1] Men were slaves to sin and hence acknowledged no obligation to righteousness, with the result that righteousness exercised no control over them. Here, it is freedom in the sense of being and outlaw, beyond the realm of God.

From this condition of slavery, the Apostle arrives into a state of real freedom. He was a slave of sin, but now he is indeed a freedman, for the highest freedom is serving the master whom you love. He takes hold of a custom which was perfectly familiar to his readers, and portrays this transition in terms of manumission. This custom was practised throughout ancient Greece and even made its way into Jewish and Christian ecclesiastical custom. "These Jewish and Judeo-pagan records are of great importance in our problem, as sure proofs of the influence of the pagan rite on Jewish Hellenism in the time of the apostle Paul."[2] There were several ways by which manumission could take place but among others there is the purchase of the slave by some god. The owner takes his slave to the temple, and there receives the purchase money from the treasury which the slave has previously paid there, out of his savings. The slave is now free from all men and the protege of the god. Here is an

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1. Rom. 6: 20
2. Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, 322

example from Delphi: "Date. Apollo the Pythian bought from Sosibius of Amphissa, for freedom, a female slave, whose name is Nicaea, by race a Roman, with a price of three minae of silver and a half-mina. Former seller according to the law: Eumnastus of Amphissa. The price he hath received. The purchase, however, Nicaea hath committed unto Apollo, for freedom."[1]

A knowledge of this custom sheds new light upon Paul's references to freedom, redemption, and slavery. We no longer see him as a cold, analytical, logician, trying to build a lifeless religion upon the foundation of a mechanical theology. He no longer stands as a Jew, so filled with the idea of bloody sacrifice that he has to make the death of Jesus a bargaining between God and the Devil. We see him rather as a warm-hearted man with a great spiritual experience, which he is trying to pass on to others. To do so, he seeks a figure of speech that will be plain and meaningful, and so he finds and uses the custom of setting slaves free by allowing the god to buy them. He uses such terms as "freedom" and "bought with a price," which to our ears may seem stilted, but to his hearers had a vital and beautiful meaning. He refers to the law which forbade the subsequent enslaving of a freedman.[2] And even when he speaks of Redemption, he probably had in mind as he used the word λυτρόν ,

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1. Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, 322 quoted from Dittenberger, Sylloge, No. 845
2. 1 Cor. 7: 23

the purchase money for manumitting a slave. All of this we need to have in the background of our minds, when we study his words regarding the freedom from the slavery of sin. We will do well to bring to mind what a tremendous effect such an appeal would have upon the downtrodden, among whom there were certainly a good many slaves, and former slaves.

Real Freedom Found in Christ

It is well to point out that at the basis of Paul's teaching concerning freedom from sin, there lies the assumption of man's free will.[1] This is a Jewish doctrine, and one of the chief reasons for the Jew maintaining that sin could be ruled. Man is morally free, and that is the reason why the great prophets could picture God as calling upon men to follow certain precepts. The Jew possessed the Law which told what he should do, and he also had a moral freedom which would allow him to choose. Besides, there was help to be had from God, through prayer.[2] This is the sentiment of contemporary Jewish literature.. Fourth Maccabees, for example, clearly points out that man has the power of reason to guard him, and hence Adam's sin is no excuse for his sin.[3]

Now this doctrine had become a bit muddled in Paul's

1. 2 Beyschlag, New Testament Theology, II, ch. 3
2. Beyschlag, New Testament Theology, II, 123
3. Hughes, Ethics of Jewish Apocalyptic Literature, 170 ff.

thinking, in regard to the Law. He seems to have still held to the theory of freedom, but in actual practise he had been enslaved by sin against his will. But real freedom has now been resorted, because through the presence of Christ a man has the power to choose, and to then follow his choice. In other words, if a man is now a slave to sin, a master whom he hates, he has the freedom to choose a new master, who will lead him unto righteousness. Formerly, then, it was freedom in theory but slavery in actuality, but now it is not only freedom in theory, but actual freedom in experience. And of this fact he cannot say enough, for while he has viewed the idea from a distance, and would no doubt have subscribed to the general thesis that man is free, now he grasps it to himself and simply revels in the real experience of freedom. Between these two states in his life, there is all the difference between intellectually stating that there is a God, and the entering into an experience that will allow one to write, "The Lord is my Shepherd." This, then, is the overwhelming truth which he has felt. The Gospel is a divine force unto salvation.[1] "For I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."[2] The gospel, in other words, is the freedom to follow righteousness.

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1. Deissmann, St. Paul, A Study in Social etc.
2. Rom. 1: 16

It is in this sense that we are to understand Paul's teaching regarding freedom from sin. The body, as the instrument of sin, has lost its controlling power. "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness."[1] The body must die because of sin, but the ultimate victory lies with the spirit, which is life. Physical death is still with us because of Adam but this is a secondary thing, since the important thing is that with the aid of Christ we can defeat sin and death. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace."[2] We are still in the flesh, it is true, but we are not of the flesh. By keeping real the mystical experience of union with Christ, we are not constantly harassed by sin as we were under the Law.[3] In this experience, we are more powerful than sin, and well able to cope with it, and if we will, defeat it.

Under the Law, whether men willed otherwise or not, they were the slaves of sin. Freedom consists of the right to decide who shall be your master, and how you shall serve him. "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"[4]

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1. Rom. 8: 10
2. Rom. 6: 14
3. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C., 161
4. Rom. 6: 16

Here, Paul clearly sets forth his feeling that a man not only can choose his master, but he must choose him. There seems to be the same underlying thought and a rather clear parallel with Jesus' saying, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mannon."[1] The problem for Paul is clear-cut and plain: reason demands that you choose whom you will serve, and then with steadfastness, stand by your choice. And this is exactly what the Christian has done. "but thanks be to God that whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness."[2]

Paul, in order to make his point perfectly plain, compares the old situation with the new state of being. "But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification and the end eternal life."[3] Here are three contrasts comparing the slavery to Christ with the slavery to sin. First, there is the contrast of Sin and God, secondly, there is the implied contrast in the wages, and last, there is the contrast of the results, namely, life and

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1. Math. 6: 24
2. Rom. 6: 17-18
3. Rom. 6: 22

death.[1] Again he compares the two states when he says, "knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin; for he that hath died is justified from sin."[2] The death of Jesus was the death of sin's control over the body and through the mystical experience we too are freed from our former bondage, and enter into the realm of free spirits.

The Ethical Element of This Freedom.

It is to be noted that this doctrine of freedom from sin through faith in Christ, has sometimes been interpreted as giving one free reign to do as he likes without any of his actions being reckoned as sin in the eyes of God. If one follows certain of his statements to logical conclusions, one may arrive at the point of saying that it is impossible for the Christian to sin. This has sometimes resulted in denying ethics as an important part of the Pauline teaching. But, "ethics are just as natural a resultant phenomena of the dying and rising again with Christ as is liberation from the flesh, sin and the Law, or the bestowal of the spirit."[3]

Certainly this is the experience and teaching of the Apostle, himself. He insists that he is free from

1. Scott, article, "Romans," Abingdon Commentary, 1150
2. Rom. 6: 6-7
3. Schweitzer, Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, 225

the rule of sin, but he does not assume that he is incapable of sinning, and to make him the basis of such a doctrine is to be blind to the real spirit of the man. Surely one cannot but see running through all of his ministry, the spirit of "I count not myself yet to have laid hold."[1] Every day he fights the good fight, and is victorious because the grace of God is granted to him daily to over come sin.[2]

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"[3] The assumption of this verse is that it is possible to continue to sin even after grace has been given from God. But that such a condition should exist, is simply beyond reason. The closest relationship between religion and morality is assumed as a basic assumption. "What then? shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid."[4] We have not been set free from the Law by Christ in order to give us license to do the things which the Law forbids. It is a case of "not in freedom to sin but freedom from sin."[5] We are not justified in taking any of Paul's words and carrying them out to what seems to us a logical conclusion, if by his own life and teaching he shows that

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1. Phil. 3: 13
2. Porter, The Mind of Christ in Paul, 227
3. Rom. 6: 1-2
4. Rom. 6: 15
5. Sanday, Romans, I.C.C., 167

he never meant them to be so understood. Even in his own day this was done and he shows clearly that he has not meant to imply that faith in Christ gives us any excuse to sin. Because of a feeling that they had superior knowledge, certain of the Corinthians had gone back into evil ways and were associating with evil companions. This is not to be tolerated and he commands, "Awake to soberness righteously and sin not."[1] He uses the word ἐκνήψατε which comes from ἐκνήφω . The old definition of the word was "To sleep off a drunken fit."[2] In the contemporary documents it still holds the sense of "get sober out of your drunken condition."[3] It is a telling phrase and well applied, for surely those who would twist St. Paul's justification teaching into an excuse for sin, are drunk.

Schweitzer has well said, "Another distinctive characteristic of this mysticism is that being in Christ is conceived as a having died and risen again with Him, in consequence of which the participant has been freed from sin . . ."[4] But it is to be understood that Paul was speaking of a strength to conquer sin, and he assumes that the mystical union with Christ can be broken. If this happens, then sin gets the upper hand again, and the victim sinks back into his old bondage. Freedom from sin lies in the experience of Christ.

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1. 8 Cor. 15: 34
2. Liddell & Scott, Greek-English Lexicon
3. Moulton & Milligan, Vocab. of Gr. Test., I
4. Schweitzer, Mysticism of Paul the Apostle.

GOD AND SIN

Paul, being a Jew, was most certain of one thing in particular, namely, the holiness of God. If it may be said that the glory of the saving work of Christ in his life is too great for words because of the deep experience of the seriousness of sin, it may also be said that the serious attitude towards sin came about because of his high, ethical conception of God. Sin could not come into the presence of God and hence sin formed a barrier which kept God and man separated. This is the reason that Paul has such a deep and abiding sense of sin and the reason that it overwhelmed him before he found a means of escaping it. "The relation of sin to God and God's holy ordinance is, moreover, the reason that sin in all its forms is guilt towards God, arrears in a debt of honour towards him and of obedience due to him (Rom. 2: 8) and so every sincoming into consciousness must beget in man anguish before God, a fear of his punishment, in a word, a sense of guilt."[1]

Now it is true that the Apostle found in Christ release from sin. But he goes a step further and sees in the work of Christ the working out of the will of God. The prophets of Israel had been primarily interested in the relation of God to his people and the people to God. They too, say sin as the thing which caused the people's separation from God. Their promise was that

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1. Beyschlag, New Testament Theology, 50

if the people would repent their sins, God would forgive and be reconciled to them. This was what loomed so large in the mind of Paul in relation to Christ. The work of Christ was one of reconciliation but it was possible because it was in a special way, the act of God himself.[1] "All things are from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ; for God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself."[2]

A New Conception of God

Surely, then, we must say that one of the great things which Paul learned from Christ, was a new conception of God. It was not the conception which he held when he was a worshipper of the Law. God had then been to him a rather cold and distant deity who demanded holiness. He set the high standard in the Law, and apparently it was nothing to him that even a sincere man could not meet the strict requirements. But in Christ Paul receives a new vision of God. "When we ask what Paul found to be new and distinctively Christian in thought, we may answer without hesitation, in the first place, that the Christian had in Paul's conviction a new conception of God. It is 'the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God,' that has dawned."[3]

1. Headlam, St. Paul and Christianity, 79
2. 2 Cor. 18, 19
3. Porter, The Mind of Christ in Paul, 96

This is an aspect of Paul that has often been overlooked. We ought to observe that as Paul is freed from sin, through his experience of Christ, he enters into Christ's revelation of God. Some have said that the heart of Paulinism is Adam and his sin, or Christ and his cross, or the relation of these two things to each other. "Much better than this it would seem, to go back once more to that New EnglandCalvinist, Jonathan Edwards, who approached Paul by the way of like experiences of his own, and . . . found the Apostle teaching us that 'the very quintessence of all Religion . . . is Love."[1]

It is true that Paul insists that Christ gave himself for our sins, but back of that great fact is another one that is often overlooked. The gift of his Son, implies the self-sacrifice of the Father and it was God who was reconciling the world to himself and making the salvation of sinful men possible. "It is God that justifieth."[2]

This is the meaning of the passage in Romans already quoted in another connection, "But God commendeth his own love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.[3] Here, salvationis traced back to its ultimate source in God as it is also in the words, "but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."[4]

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1. Porter, The Mind of Christ in Paul, 87
2. Rom. 8: 33
3. Rom. 5: 8
4. Rom. 6: 23

God's action in this matter is not merely passive but active. Christ not only offered himself, but God sent his Son and gave him in order that men might have fellowship with him. So that while formerly under the law Paul felt himself a slave of God, because of the new revelation which has come to him, he now sees his relationship as changed to that of a son." So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son."[1] God, for Paul becomes active love, and active forgiveness, not condoning sin, but providing a way of escape from it through Christ, and hence making fellowship of man with God possible. This warmer and more intimate conception of God is more in harmony with Greek thought than it is with Jewish,[2] but its origin is to be traced to Paul's experience of Christ. For God is not intimate or within human life to Paul as he was to the Greeks. Schweitzer has noted that there is no God-mysticism in Paul's Letters, but only Christ mysticism.[3] It is a different concept than that of the Greeks, and on the other hand, it is different than that of the Jews. It is in a word, a Christian concept.

God's Forgiveness of Sin

What psychology means when it speaks of transfer-

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1. Gal. 4: 7
2. Macchioro, From Orpheus to Paul, 201 ff.
3. Schweitzer, Mysticism of the Apostle Paul, 3 ff

ence Paul had experienced in Christ.[1] That is, he felt that through the crucifixion and resurrection, the guilt of sin had been taken over by another, satisfying the Law of God, and obtaining for men the forgiveness of their sins. The transference of sins to God, had been impossible and men had not experienced forgiveness of their sins, until Christ had paid the necessary sacrifice for them. But after Paul had surrendered himself fully to Christ, he was so conscious of this release from sin that he was redeemed from the shifting servitudes to which men had been subjected. For him, the Cross solved the problem of sin and forgiveness.[2] In the Cross, he receives a vision of a God who so loves men that he is willing to sacrifice his Son for them, and is anxious to forgive them their sins.

"He who has fallen under the power of the conception of dying and rising again with Christ advances into an ever deeper consciousness of sin, and attains in the struggle to die from sin a quiet certitude of the forgiveness of sin. That is what Paul promises to those who, like himself, are determined to make the being-redeemed-through-Christ not a matter of word only, but of deed."[3] The certainty that through Christ, God has forgiven him his sins, is one of the corner-stones of his mighty, compelling, faith.

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1. Barbour, Sin and the New Psychology, ch. 10
2. Glover, Paul of Tarsus, 69
3. Schweitzer, Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, 388

Here again we need to be on guard lest we misinterpret his language. From the custom of manumission, and from the legal practice of his day, we see that metaphors connected with forgiveness of debts or trespasses take on a very real and vital meaning. "In cases of non-payment of a money-debt the system of personal execution allowed not only arrest but even slavery for debt."[1] It is also true that the ancient note of hand generally was in the form of a letter acknowledging the debt. With this in mind, the following passage takes on a new meaning: "And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses; having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us:"[2] Deissmann translates χειρόγραφον as "handwriting" or a bond.[3] So, while we were in slavery to Sin and to the Law because we were unable to pay our just debt of righteousness, God with his loving spirit, has wiped out our debt and given us forgiveness through the gift of his Son, Christ.

But only in the experience of Christ is God's forgiveness to be found, for this is his great plan for the redemption of men. He speaks of God as the

1. Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, 330
2. Col. 2: 13-14
3. Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, 332

one "who delivered us out of the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins:".[1] Again he thanks "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" for the gift of Christ "in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace."[2] Christ, to him, is the manifestation of a God who is Love, and has himself made it possible for men to receive forgiveness of their sins. Christ is he "whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to show his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God."[3] Here he uses the word ἄφεσις which signifies a complete and unreserved forgiveness.

It is to be noted that he traces the forgiveness of sins back to God and that while forgiveness comes about through Christ, the final authority rests with God. Paul seems to have had in his mind what the Scribes frankly gave speech to, in reference to Jesus: "But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, even God?"[4] This is another indication that one of the main effects which Christianity had upon the Apostle, was the instil-

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1. Col. 1: 13-14
2. Eph. 1: 7
3. Rom. 3: 25
4. Mark 2: 6-7

ling of a new concept of God. How far has Paul travelled from the God of the Old Testament, and how close he has approached the Heavenly Father of Jesus!

CONCLUSION

We now come to make a brief evaluation of Paul's teaching concerning sin. This we must do with a good deal of caution, regarding our conclusions as incomplete, and, to a certain extent,as tentative. For we do not have what may be called a complete statement of Paul's doctrine. It is to be noted that most of his references must be taken from First Corinthians and from Romans, in which the Apostle no doubt had certain specific situations and problems in mind. The problem lies in not making general what he intended to apply to only a specific case, and in finding his universal principles.

In considering his deep consciousness of sin and his despair under the Law we are on fairly safe ground. The picture stands out so plainly that it cannot be missed. Here was a young man from a race that was above allothers in its high and holy concept of God, and its consciousness of sin. Yet this young man has such a passionate zeal for purity that his consciousness of sin goes even beyond the Jewish idea, so that he is robbed of all self-respect and hope. But after groping about in despair he finds that which not only cleanses him from his sin, but gives him the power to be its master. Whereas he was a slave of sin, now he is a slave of righteousness and the master of sin. This is fundamental

in understanding Paul's religion.

Now obviously there are certain phases of his concept of sin which are limited to his own day and have little meaning or value so far as we are concerned. There is, for example, his idea that the origin of sin lies with Adam, and that through him it was passed on to all the race. Closely allied to this is the idea that physical death originated with the sin of Adam. These things he took over from his Jewish training and there are few who would insist upon their relevancy for our day. These things are not very important, whether we choose to accept them or to reject them.

More serious is the charge that "The disproportionate emphasis given to sin in traditional Christianity has been an unfortunate Paulinism. How much better it would have been if Paul and his disciples down the ages had heeded better Paul's own exhortation, 'Whatsoever things are true. . . pure . . lovely . . think on these things!"[1] And in this relationit is often pointed out that he gave but a grudging consent to marriage, clearly indicating that, if a man could rule his lust, it is better to remain unmarried.

Now the reasons for this view have been pointed out and the thing that we need to remember is that Paul was

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1. Tolson, Paul and Jesus, unpublished paper.

expecting an immediate Parousia. In this he was mistaken and with that outgrown idea we must also place certain phases of his emphasis upon sin as lust, and his reluctant consent to the beauty of the marriage relationship. Lust does constitute sin, but it is not the only sin, and it is debatable as to whether or not it is the most important sin. Yet, so far as bulk of attention is concerned, it seems to be the chief consideration in Paul's thinking.

But he was writing to specific communities and facing specific problems. That was the thing which needed attention at that particular time and place and so, as we read the letters of Paul, this view of sin appears to us to be all together out of proportion. If his letters contained his complete teaching regarding the doctrine of sin, then he would be open to the serious charges which are directed against him on this account.

We should remember that Paul often uses the term σάρξ in the larger sense, as meaning materiality. It is doubtful that we have a right to universalize his references to sin as being essentially lust. If we do, we will get a distorted view of evil and of life. This is what traditional Christianity has often done, but it is my feeling that in so doing it has been unfair to Paul and missed the larger spirit of his life.

The failure to recognize unethical behavior as

sin has often been charged against Paul. It is certainly true that this is not one of his main points, if we are to judge by specific references. But this is there by implication and Paul evidently expected ethics to be one of the fruits of the mystical union with Christ. This is most clearly brought out in his own life and in his words of rebuke to those who used their freedom in Christ as an excuse for immorality. This element is not so specifically stressed, but it is unmistakedly present in Paul.

In a study of Paul's conception of sin, the thing that is overwhelmingly impressive is the deep significance of Christ for him. Certainly he speaks the truth when he says, "For me to live is Christ . ."[1] All the evil in his nature which made him unclean, and everything that made him "miss the mark" as he aimed for God, he finds put under his control through his mystical experience in Christ. Sin always hovers over him as a possibility, but his spirit is no longer that of a slave, but of a conquerer. Actual moral freedom to choose the right from the wrong and to follow his choice, is the glorious gift which Christ has given to him. Paul is one who has experienced the moral struggle in its most acute fashion, and after being certain that he cannot win in his own strength, finds the added strength

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1. Phil. 1: 21

in Christ.

Through this experience in Christ, there comes a new conception of God which is very near that of Jesus. No longer does he see in a hard, brittle way, the Law, the sinner, and an outraged God. Now his picture has softened and God is one who understands that man cannot keep the Law by himself, and so he sends his own Son to save men from the Law and their sin. He comes into a conception of God who forgives sin and who wants to aid men in overcoming their sin.

The question arises as to whether such a view of sin as Paul held, has any value for our own day. It is objected that his view is too serious, too inclusive, and unfair to the dignity of humanity. We are a bit fearful that a consciousness of sin means the presence of a psychological complex and indicates an unhealthy state of mind. All of these things are charged to Saint Paul.

This is mostly due to our failure to "see (Paul) steadily and to see him whole." His serious attitude towards sin did not make him pessimistic nor did it lessen the worth of personality in his mind. His inclusive view of sin did not shut him off from the freedom of righteousness in Christ. Nor did his view of sin lower the dignity of humanity in his thinking. It did, however, make him feel his dependence upon Divine Power and gave him a religious experience that not only glorified his own life, but the lives of many others.

Such a concept of sin is needed in our own day. This is not to say that we need and should have an exact replica of Paul's experience. But it does mean that a deep consciousness of sin as that which shuts us off from God and makes us "miss the mark" as we strive to realize our own best selves, is needed. A lack of this consciousness leads ultimately to cynicism and disillusionment. Its presence gives us a real sense of our dependence upon God, and in a word, sets our Ideal and our Faith upon a higher place.

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